United Nations A/60/845

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 August 2006

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Agenda items 106, 107 and 108

Crime prevention and criminal justice

International drug control

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 24 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a letter from Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, addressed to you concerning the special Conference of Ministers of Justice of French-Speaking African Countries, which was held in Sharm el-Sheikh from 7 to 9 February 2006, to which the report on the Conference prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration are attached (see annex). I would kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 106, 107 and 108.

(*Signed*) Maged A. **Abdelaziz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 24 April 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Egyptian Ministry of Justice has organized jointly with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Organization of la Francophonie the special Conference of Ministers of Justice of French-Speaking African Countries, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 7 to 9 February 2006. The main theme of the Conference was the implementation of the international legal instruments to fight terrorism.

As fighting terrorism worldwide on the international, regional and national levels is a common effort and an urgent priority, I have the honour to enclose herewith the report on the Conference, prepared by UNODC staff (see appendix I), as well as the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration (see appendix II). I would greatly appreciate if you would convey these documents to the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Ahmed **Aboul Gheit**
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Appendix I

[Original: French]

Report of the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa on the implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions

Sharm El-Sheikh, 7-9 February 2006

I. Introduction

1. The Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa on the implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions was held at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 7 to 9 February 2006. This conference was jointly organized by the Egyptian Government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie (IOF). It is part of the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Organization of la Francophonie. It follows the principles of the Cairo Declaration adopted 4 September 2003 at the conclusion of the Conference of Ministers of Justice of French-Speaking Countries of Africa for the promotion and ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Additional Protocols, as well as the Port-Louis Declaration, adopted on 27 October 2004 at the conclusion of the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa to promote the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Conventions against Corruption, Transnational Organized Crime and the universal anti-terrorism conventions. This Declaration invited the French-speaking countries of Africa to conduct annual evaluations of progress achieved with respect to the ratification of, accession to and rapid implementation of these conventions by providing relevant information to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

II. Organization of the Conference

A. Opening of the Conference

2. The Conference was presented by Dr. Iskandar Ghattas, Deputy of the Egyptian People's Assembly, and was followed by five statements.

3. His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Abou El Leil, Minister of Justice of Egypt, then opened the Conference and welcomed all his counterparts as well as all the participants. He underlined the links between transnational organized crime and terrorism as well as the importance of international cooperation in addressing it. He also affirmed Egypt's commitment to combat terrorism and recalled the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa to promote the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime which had taken place in Cairo in 2003. To combat that phenomenon, Egypt had adopted legislation criminalizing terrorist acts and was a party to regional and international conventions that used all means to strengthen cooperation against

terrorism. He also recalled that Egypt had offered to host an international conference against terrorism.

4. The Governor of South Sinai then welcomed all participants to the South Sinai region.

5. Mr. Iskandar Ghattus, on behalf of the President of the Egyptian People's Assembly, stressed the importance of implementation through legislation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions and the key role of national parliaments in that process.

6. Mr. Jean-Paul Laborde, Chief, Terrorism Prevention Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, called for concerted action by the executive, legislative and judicial branches for a successful outcome to combat terrorism effectively. He stressed the importance and richness of a shared counter-terrorism culture and a combined international criminal policy. In conclusion, he noted the close cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) — present at the Conference — and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

7. Ms. Christine Dessouches, representative of the International Organization of la Francophonie, emphasized the importance of the Bamako Declaration, which, furthermore, had established the Human Rights Observatory. She stressed the role of the Mission to promote peace, democracy and human rights in the fight against terrorism, in line with that Declaration.

B. Participation

8. The Ministers and delegations representing the following French-speaking countries of Africa participated in the Conference: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo and Tunisia.

9. The following organizations and institutions also participated in the Conference as observers: The International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

C. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda

10. After the opening of the Ministerial Conference, Mr. Iskandar Ghattas proposed that the Minister of Justice of Egypt, the host country, should be elected President of the Conference by acclamation. This proposal was approved by all delegations. After his election, the President invited the Conference to elect the members of the Bureau. He proposed that the representatives of Comoros, Mali and Congo should be elected Vice-Presidents and nominated Tunisia as rapporteur. The Conference endorsed these proposed nominations by acclamation. The Bureau of the Conference was composed of the following:

President: His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud El-Leil, Minister of Justice of Egypt

Vice-Presidents: His Excellency Mr. Rachid Ben Massoundi, Vice-President of the Comoros, Minister of Justice; Her Excellency Ms. Fanta Sylla, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of Mali; His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Entcha-

Ebia, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Congo; Rapporteur: His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Lejmi, Public Prosecutor of Tunisia.

III. Proceedings of the Conference

11. Technical presentations were made on the various items of the agenda, following which the participants exchanged views on their experience and expectations.

12. The meetings were presided in turn by the Vice-President of the Conference, His Excellency Mr. Rachid Ben Massoundi, Vice-President of the Comoros and Minister of Justice, Her Excellency Ms. Fanta Sylla, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of Mali, and Mr. Gabriel Entcha-Ebia, Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Congo.

A. Recent international developments in counter-terrorism

13. A representative of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime made a detailed presentation on recent developments at the international level in counter-terrorism. In that regard, he highlighted the report of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, "A more secure world: our shared responsibility" (A/59/565 and Corr.1), the Global Strategy against Terrorism launched in the address by the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Madrid on 10 March 2005; the 2005 World Summit at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly and the creation of a special team headed by a member of the office of the United Nations Secretary-General to ensure follow-up and implementation of the Global Strategy against Terrorism; the latest developments at the United Nations General Assembly — in particular the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism — and those in the International Maritime Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency; and the new Security Council resolutions 1617 (2005) of 29 July 2005 and 1624 (2005) of 14 September 2005. He also mentioned that a Ministerial Round Table against Terrorism would be held at Madrid during the first half of 2006 for the 27 countries of West and Central Africa, organized by the Spanish Government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

14. The representative of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate made a presentation on the role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and its Executive Directorate established by Security Council resolution 1535 (2004), in particular its role as *facilitator* in the provision of technical assistance in all fields covered by resolution 1373 (2001).

15. Following these presentations, the participants entered into a rich debate in which, among other things, they stressed the importance of the technical assistance provided by UNODC, especially in the training of officials responsible for combating terrorism at both the local and regional levels, as well as the need to strengthen national coordination of counter-terrorism agencies in order to make their efforts more effective.

B. Follow-up to the Cairo (2003) and Port-Louis (2004) Declarations on combating terrorism: reports of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa

16. The very detailed reports provided valuable information on the status of ratifications and legislative implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions, as well as progress made in submission of reports to the Counter-Terrorism Committee pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The participants noted in particular the importance of speeding up national procedures for ratification and implementing legislation for the universal anti-terrorism conventions, the need to promote effective coordination of all the national bodies responsible for combating terrorism and the need to obtain assistance from UNODC, the links between transnational organized crime and other forms of criminality with acts of terrorism.

C. From Port-Louis to Sharm El-Sheikh: Status of progress made in ratification and legislative implementation of universal anti-terrorism conventions and submission of reports to the Counter-Terrorism Committee

17. A representative of UNODC gave details on efforts made by the French-speaking countries of Africa since the adoption of the Port-Louis Declaration up to the Sharm El-Sheikh Conference in the ratification and legislative implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions. It should be noted that, since the Port-Louis Conference, sixteen instruments had been ratified, which brought to five the number of French-speaking countries of Africa having ratified the twelve universal anti-terrorism conventions. Eleven countries had signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In addition, one State had adopted a new law, six States had prepared a draft law and seven had begun the process of revision of the penal code. Furthermore, he gave a status report on technical cooperation of French-speaking countries of Africa with UNODC as well as the new training and specialization programme on counter-terrorism for judges.

18. The representative of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate called on the French-speaking countries of Africa which had not yet submitted their reports to the Counter-Terrorism Committee to do so as soon as possible. She stressed that those reports allowed the Committee and its Executive Directorate to assess the progress made by these countries in the application of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) as well as the problems encountered and to facilitate technical assistance if necessary for the full application of that resolution.

D. Information on access to legal data on counter-terrorism

19. A representative of UNODC presented the legal database of the Terrorism Prevention Branch, which contains terrorism legislation from over 140 countries, their jurisprudence as well as technical assistance tools available to the French-speaking countries of Africa.

IV. Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration

20. At the conclusion of their work, the Ministers and heads of delegation adopted the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration, which contains all the elements necessary to provide follow-up to their work, and took note of the offer of the Minister of Justice of Burkina Faso to host the next Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-speaking countries of Africa.

Appendix II

Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration

On 9 February 2006,

We, the Ministers of Justice and heads of delegations of Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo and Tunisia,

In the presence of the United Nations, represented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate of the United Nations Security Council, as well as the International Organization of la Francophonie;

Participating in the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa for the ratification and implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions, held at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 7 to 9 February 2006;

Reaffirming the condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), international law and the relevant international conventions, and that any act of international terrorism constitutes a threat to international peace and security;

Also condemning the incitement of terrorist acts in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 1624 (2005) of 19 September 2005;

Strongly determined to strengthen international cooperation in criminal matters, which constitutes an essential element in the fight against terrorism;

Endorsing the Bangkok Declaration adopted by the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Bangkok from 18 to 25 April 2005, in particular its elements on terrorism;

Taking note of the outcome of the 2005 World Summit held at the opening of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly which stressed the significant role the United Nations plays in the fight against terrorism and the importance of regional and bilateral cooperation in this field;

Welcoming the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 April 2005 at its fifty-ninth session, as well as its opening for signature and ratification at the 2005 World Summit;

Noting with satisfaction that United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/43 of 6 January 2006 requests the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna to continue its efforts to enhance, through its mandate, the capabilities of the United Nations in the prevention of terrorism, and recognizes, in the context of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), its role in assisting States in becoming parties to and implementing the relevant international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and in

strengthening international cooperation mechanisms in criminal matters related to terrorism, including through national capacity-building;

Welcoming the role of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate as facilitator in the area of technical assistance as well as the role of the Terrorism Prevention Branch in providing the French-speaking States of Africa with legal assistance and support to criminal justice systems so that they may meet their obligations under the universal anti-terrorism conventions;

Also welcoming the issuance of the Cairo and Port-Louis Declarations, adopted on 4 September 2003 and 27 October 2007 respectively at the Conferences of Ministers of Justice of the French-Speaking Countries of Africa for the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Conventions against Corruption and Transnational Organized Crime and the universal anti-terrorism conventions, as documents A/C.3/58/4 and A/59/811 of the United Nations General Assembly;

1. Warmly congratulate the French-speaking States of Africa which, since the Port-Louis Declaration, have ratified the universal anti-terrorism conventions;

2. Recommend that the French-speaking States of Africa which are not yet parties to the universal anti-terrorism conventions should ratify or adhere to those conventions as soon as possible;

3. Warmly congratulate the French-speaking States of Africa which have already signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism;

4. Recommend that the French-speaking States of Africa should ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism as soon as possible;

5. Call on the French-speaking States of Africa to adopt implementing legislation incorporating the provisions of the above-mentioned instruments, in order to combat terrorism and improve international cooperation in criminal matters;

6. Underline the importance, at the national level, of coordination of efforts made to strengthen action against terrorism and to that end, request the French-speaking countries of Africa to establish appropriate mechanisms for dialogue and coordination at the national level;

7. Stress the importance of respect for human rights in criminal proceedings begun in the context of combating terrorism, and more specifically the principle of a fair trial in procedures for international cooperation in criminal matters as well as the need to ensure the protection of victims;

8. Call on the international community to continue its efforts to pursue dialogue and promote greater understanding among civilizations in order to prevent the systematic denigration of religions and cultures, and to take all appropriate measures, in accordance with its obligations under international law, to thwart the incitement to terrorist acts motivated by extremism and intolerance and to prevent subversive activities of terrorists and their supporters;

9. Request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, to continue to provide the necessary technical assistance to the French-speaking countries of Africa for the

ratification and adoption of implementing legislation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions as well as the drafting of national reports to the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee;

10. Also request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, to train the relevant professionals in the criminal justice system in the implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions, in particular through holding workshops on specific topics relating to legal aspects of the fight against terrorism, utilizing in particular the skills of the Cairo Regional Training Centre of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;

11. Strongly request the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to intensify the development of technical assistance tools, including model laws, legislative guides and training manuals intended for professionals in the criminal justice system;

12. Invite the French-speaking States of Africa to conduct an annual evaluation of progress made in the ratification, adherence and rapid implementation of these instruments and in submission of reports to the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee within the required deadlines;

13. Note with satisfaction and support United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/43 which states that the Ad Hoc Committee shall, on an expedited basis, continue to elaborate the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and shall continue to discuss the item concerning the question of convening a high-level conference under the auspices of the United Nations and the initiative of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for a high-level conference that could possibly take the form of a special session of the General Assembly, at which the international community would finalize a common response against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and would take other relevant initiatives;

14. Call the attention of the international community to the importance of appropriate programmes of good governance, support to criminal justice systems, human, economic, social and cultural development and promotion of the rule of law both at the national and international level which constitute important tools for fighting crime in all its forms, including terrorism;

15. Thank the Minister of Justice on behalf of the Government of Burkina Faso for its offer to host the fourth Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-speaking countries of Africa;

16. Invite the President of the Conference to bring this Declaration to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly at its sixtieth session;

17. Express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in particular the Minister of Justice, for having hosted and co-organized at Sharm El-Sheikh, on 7, 8 and 9 February 2006, the Conference of Ministers of Justice of the French-speaking countries of Africa for the implementation of the universal anti-terrorism conventions, as well as to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Organization of la Francophonie, who jointly organized it.